

professed that there is corruption, discord, and decay of character. So long as the customs are simple, naive, and unconscious, they do not produce evil in character, no matter what they are. If reflection is awakened and the mores cannot satisfy it, then doubt arises; individual character will then be corrupted and the society will degenerate.

442. Definitions of chastity, decency, propriety, etc. Chastity, modesty, and decency are entirely independent of each other. The ethnographic proof of this is complete. Chastity means conformity to the taboo on the sex relation, whatever its terms and limits may be in the group at the time. Therefore, where polyandry is in the mores, women who comply with it are not unchaste. Where there are no laws for the conduct of unmarried women they are not unchaste. It is evidently an incorrect use of language to describe the unmarried women of a tribe as unchaste, unless there is a rule for them. It can only mean that they violate the rule of some other society, and that can be said always about those in any group. There are cases in which women wear nothing but are faithful to a strict sex taboo, and there are cases where they go completely covered but have no sex taboo. Decency has to do with the covering of the body and with the concealment of bodily functions. Modesty is reserve of behavior and sentiment. It is correlative to chastity and decency, but covers a far wider field. It arrests acts, speech, gestures, etc., and repels suggestions at the limit of propriety wherever that may be set by the mores. Propriety is the sum of all the prescriptions in the mores as to right and proper behavior, or as to the limit of degree which prevents excess or vice. It is not

dictated in laws. It is a floating notion. From time
to time,
however, dictates of propriety are enacted into
police regulations.
Propriety is guaranteed by shame, which is the
sense of pain due
to incurring disapproval because one has violated
the usage
which the mores command every one to observe.
It is narrated
of Italian nuns who had been veiled even from
each other for
half a lifetime that when turned out of their
convents they
suffered from exposing their faces the same shame
that other
women would suffer from far greater exposure.
It could not